

VIRGINIA FIRE SERVICES BOARD



A Report of Findings and Recommendations:

Pittsylvania County Fire & EMS Study



November 2015

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Virginia Fire Services Board would like to extend thanks to the following organizations for their contributions to this study:

Fire Departments	Single County EMS Agencies
Dry Fork Fire Department	Gretna Rescue
Chatham Fire Department	Chatham Rescue
Gretna Fire Department	Cool Branch Rescue
Ringgold Fire Department	640 Community Rescue
Kentuck Fire Department	Angel Search and Rescue
Tunstall Fire & Rescue	
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report documents the findings and recommendations for the Pittsylvania County Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Study. The information contained is not to be construed as legal advice or as binding recommendations. This report is intended to provide guidance for Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors and its fire and rescue stakeholders to build on what is working well, while observing opportunities for improvement. Strategic focus in these areas will enhance the overall quality and coordination of fire-rescue service delivery to residents of Pittsylvania County.

The study was requested by the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors in order to analyze several areas of responsibility within the County's fire and rescue services. The Study Committee was comprised of representatives from the Virginia Fire Services Board, the Virginia Department of Fire Programs, the Virginia Department of Forestry and the Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services.

The findings and recommendations are organized into five working themes to include:

- Organizational and Operational Development
- Communication
- Training
- Budget and Administration
- Delivery of Services

These working themes provide a central focus for prioritizing the study's recommendations. They serve as a guide for the Study Committee to identify and evaluate measures that ultimately will improve the quality and coordination of fire and rescue services within Pittsylvania County.

Below is a high-level summary of the findings and recommendations, which will be discussed further in the report.

Theme 1: Organizational and Operational Development (Page 12)

- **Centralized Authority for Fire and Rescue Services:** Pittsylvania County should consider establishing a countywide Fire-Rescue Chief to assist as the central position responsible for the supervision and authority for all fire and rescue issues throughout the County.
 - The County should create an ordinance pertaining to Fire and Rescue in order to establish a Fire and Rescue Association (*the name of the organization will/can be decided upon by the County and its fire and EMS stakeholders*).
- **Consolidation of Smaller Departments:** Pittsylvania County should pursue efforts to explore the option of consolidating smaller departments to maximize its limited resources and personnel.

- **Strategic Planning:** The County's fire and rescue organizations should develop a data-driven Strategic Plan with stakeholder input.
 - Pittsylvania County should develop a mission and vision statement for the system that includes all fire & EMS responders' participation and input.
- **Accountability Practices:** Working with the Fire and Rescue Association, Pittsylvania County should adopt a single countywide Standard Operating Procedures and Guidelines (SOPs/SOGs) with an accountability system.
- **Fire Prevention Activities:** Pittsylvania County should designate its current fire marshal as the individual responsible for the enforcement of fire codes, fire investigations, and to coordinate public fire and life safety education.

Theme 2: Communications (Page 19)

- **Levels of Interdepartmental Communications:** Pittsylvania County should host a strategic communication session to resolve challenges between the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors, the County Administration and members of the volunteer fire and rescue departments.

Theme 3: Training (Page 21)

- **Coordinated Training Program:** It is recommended that structured and coordinated training program be established to address the comprehensive training needs of the entire County. It is further recommended placing an emphasis on the importance of specialty training and schedules.

Theme 4: Budget and Administration (Page 23)

- **County Funding and Capital Improvements:** With input from the Fire and Rescue Association, Pittsylvania County should improve its capital improvement plan for upgrading its fire and rescue stations and equipment. At minimum it should include funding for apparatus replacement, turnout gear and air pack replacement with consideration of inflation costs.
- **Financial Accountability:** A formal accountability plan should be developed for county funds and revenue recovery funds. The plan should be communicated to citizens and members of the fire and rescue organizations
- **Standardization and Central Purchasing:** Working with the Fire and Rescue Association, the County Administration should develop and implement a centralized purchasing option to establish equipment and apparatus standardization and reduce operational expenses.

Theme 5: Delivery of Services (Page 27)

- **Tanker Task Force:** Pittsylvania County should pursue efforts to establish a Tanker Task Force concept to improve water supply capabilities and re-evaluate ISO rating throughout county.

The foregoing is a recommendation authorized pursuant to Va. Code 9.1-203.A.4 and is not to be construed as legal advice or as a binding recommendation.

- *Recruitment and Retention:* Pittsylvania County should adopt a countywide recruitment and retention plan in addition to examining the feasibility hiring Recruitment and Retention Position.
- *Operations and Staffing:* Pittsylvania County should establish minimal staffing standards for apparatus response.

METHODOLOGY

For each task of the work plan, the Study Committee identified objectives, performed specific activities, and delivered project products. The following is an overview of the study process:

PHASE I: INITIATE PROJECT

Objectives: Initiation of Study

To initiate the study, the Study Committee began by gaining a comprehensive understanding of the project's background, goals, and expectations. This was carried out by identifying in detail the specific objectives for the review, and assessing how well the work plan would accomplish the objectives. In addition, the Study Committee set out to establish a mutually agreed project work plan, timeline, deliverables, and monitoring procedures that would support the accomplishment of all project objectives. The final study initiation step consisted of collecting and reviewing existing operational data, information on agreements along with relevant policies and procedures. Many of these review materials are included in the appendix of this study.

As part of Phase I, the Study Committee met with Pittsylvania County leadership to establish working relationships, make logistical arrangements, and determine communication lines. During these meetings, the Study Committee discussed the objectives of the project and identified policy issues and concerns central to the study.

The meetings also allowed the Study Committee to obtain pertinent reports and background materials relevant to the review, such as current and historical staffing data, as well as a description of the current service delivery system and organization.

Based on this course of action, the Study Committee concluded this section of the study with a revised project work plan/timeline deliverable.

PHASE II: OBTAIN STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Objectives: Conduct Leadership Interviews & Capture Input from the Departments

The second phase of the study consisted of leadership interviews and department evaluations. The expectations were as follows:

- Identify expected service levels;
- Identify opinions of department officials concerning the operations and performance of the department;
- Identify issues and concerns of officials regarding fire and rescue services;
- Identify perceived gaps in existing service levels and new priorities in mission; and,
- Identify strengths and weaknesses as perceived by departmental personnel.

Each goal was realized with the support of Pittsylvania County's study project manager Jim Davis. Mr. Davis assisted in finalizing the interview list and establishing a schedule that was

reasonable, but more importantly convenient for the interviewees. All interviews were conducted during an allotted timeframe and a considerable amount of information was collected. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with all Pittsylvania County's Fire and Rescue organizations, County leadership including County Administrator Clarence Monday.

The Study Committee received descriptions of staffing and deployment responses in meeting service demands at targeted service levels. The discussions also provided a snapshot of personnel management contentions as well as concerns regarding service delivery. It is also important to note that the Study Committee visited all fire and rescue stations throughout Pittsylvania County in an effort to supplement their research of the County's organizational functioning.

The deliverable for this section of the study work plan consisted of a thorough evaluation of the site visit data and the development of working themes to capture the team's assessment.

PHASE III: PREPARE ANALYSES AND DEVELOP CORE STRATEGIES

Objectives: Evaluate Current Trends and Prepare a Report

The third phase of the study work plan involved further investigation and understanding of the organizational structures, operations, limitations, achievements, and opportunities for improvement within the volunteer and career system. The activities that supported this process consisted of additional requests for information not already obtained in Phase I and II of the work plan. Data requests, made in this phase of the study, attempt to address any issues that emerged from the interviews, and further evaluate implications of the operational issues cited. Data obtained during the study process also assists the Study Committee in identifying issues influencing the current levels of service.

After receiving and critically evaluating information from the interviews and all supporting materials, the Study Committee began identifying the necessary critical action steps to achieve exceptional organizational functioning and uniform service levels throughout Pittsylvania County.

Each action step was selected to identify the changes in policies, facilities, apparatus, and equipment to ensure that the County would be capable of providing fire-rescue services at the desired level going forward.

The deliverables achieved in Phase III involved drafting a report that evaluated current trends in the services, recommended action steps for improvement, and the assignment of responsibility.

PHASE IV: PREPARE FINAL REPORT

Objectives: Prepare and Present Final Report

The final phase of the study involved documenting the results of all previous tasks into a written report with critical components, such as an executive summary, methodology, background, and findings and recommendations. Once completed, a draft report was shared with the designated locality project manager, Jim Davis to ensure the content is accurate. Upon receiving corrections, the Study Committee revised the draft report, as needed, to assist in the preparation and issuance of the final report.

The deliverables for the final phase of the work plan consisted of 1) a draft report, and 2) the final report

COUNTY DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Pittsylvania County is the largest county in Virginia; it consists of 982.89 square miles¹. Pittsylvania is located in the south-central Piedmont plateau region with elevations averaging from 400 to 800 feet above sea level². The highest point in the County is Smith Mountain, which is 2,043 feet high. Pittsylvania County borders North Carolina and is adjacent to the City of Danville. Chatham, the county seat, is 140 miles from Richmond, 68 miles from Roanoke, 50 miles from Lynchburg, and 96 miles from Raleigh, North Carolina³.

Pittsylvania County is home to about 62,383 citizens with a median age of 44 years old⁴. The median income of the County is \$42,143 which is \$21,764 below the state's median income⁵. Pittsylvania County has developed considerable manufacturing and commercial base largely as a result of excellent highway and rail transportation systems⁶. The County is part of the Danville MSA, representing a major market and trade center for Southside Virginia⁷. Pittsylvania County is an economically diverse locality with an advanced manufacturing and technological community⁸. A high level of emphasis is placed on bio-agriculture, motorsports, polymers, wood products and warehouse/distribution⁹.

The goal of the fire and rescue service is to protect life and property by delivering the highest possible level of service consistent with need at the lowest possible cost consistent with safety. First responders responsible for fire suppression provide an array of additional emergency services to the residents of Pittsylvania County. They include light and heavy rescue, vehicle extrication, water rescue, hazardous materials, and other non-emergency activities. The rescue squads within the County provide basic life support (BLS) and advanced life support (ALS) rescue ambulance services to all areas of the County. According to Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System during 2014, Pittsylvania County responded to approximately 3,254 fire and emergency medical services (EMS).¹⁰ Pittsylvania County's record keeping system reported 2,930 fire calls and 7,685 of EMS calls.¹¹

¹ About the Community, Pittsylvania County, VA

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Virginia Economic Development Partnership

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System (VFIRS) Appendix 2 and Virginia Pre-Hospital Information Bridge Report Appendix 3

¹¹ County Record Keeping System

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides a summary of the five working themes for this study report. The summary is based on areas of concern that were repeatedly cited in the face-to-face interviews and observed during the site visit. Following this section is an in-depth examination of each theme, to include findings and recommendations.

Theme 1: Organizational and Operational Development (Page 12)

- Centralized Authority for Fire and Rescue Services
- Strategic Planning
- Accountability Practices
- Fire Prevention Activities

Theme 2: Communications (Page 19)

- Levels of Interdepartmental Communications

Theme 3: Training (Page 21)

- Coordinated Training Program

Theme 4: Budget and Administration (Page 23)

- County Funding and Capital Improvements
- Financial Accountability
- Standardization and Central Purchasing

Theme 5: Delivery of Services (Page 27)

- Recruitment and Retention
- Operations and Staffing

Pittsylvania County's fire and rescue service providers and administration should continue utilizing the national consensus standards. The standards were developed by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) with the input and support of fire and emergency services personnel, businesses, industry and other stakeholders, as guidance documents and resources to address several of the findings identified in this report.¹²

¹² For a complete listing of the national consensus standards developed by the National Fire Prevention Association, visit: http://www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/list_of_codes_and_standards.asp

THEME 1: ORGANIZATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

One of the boundaries faced by Pittsylvania County is the lack of coordination of its fire and rescue services. Part of this issue arises due to the lack of clarity in the organizational structure. Presently, there is no coordinated Pittsylvania County Fire-Rescue System, but rather multiple independent agencies working alongside one another. In some instances these working relationships are positive and productive, but often the competing interests are detrimental with no long-term benefits.

Disorganization negatively affects the service delivery to residents of Pittsylvania County and its visitors. In order to improve Pittsylvania County's level of service, it is recommended that internal organizational development strategies be considered. This recommendation encourages organizational cohesion, innovation, and effectiveness while guiding the inevitable change that will occur as Pittsylvania County strengthens its fire suppression and rescue capabilities.

Centralized Authority for Fire and Rescue Services

In the current organizational structure, there is no one entity charged with the coordination of Pittsylvania County's fire and rescue administrative and operational responsibilities. Each volunteer department currently retains final operational authority over its members. The study team would recommend that the county create, by ordinance, a Fire and Rescue Department headed by a full time Fire and Rescue Chief.

It is imperative for the County to develop one organization that has representation across stakeholders. Membership should seek participation from one member from each of the volunteer departments and squads, a representative from the paid service, presumably the paid chief and a provision for one named alternate for each person. The name of the association should be decided by the entities involved. Lastly, the County should pursue establishing an ordinance pertaining to fire and rescue in order to establish a Fire and Rescue Association or whichever name the stakeholders choose.

Recommendations:

1. Board of Supervisors should embrace and codify a Fire and Rescue Department.
2. Board of Supervisors should establish a Countywide Fire-Rescue Chief as the centralized position responsible for the supervision and authority for all fire and rescue issues throughout the County.
 - a. The position should be codified through a local ordinance outlining specific responsibilities and expectations.
 - b. Provide proper support staff to facilitate an effective span of control.
3. The newly formed Fire and Rescue Department must ensure that public safety entities with the County are working as one.

- a. Collaboration will help to develop ownership in a unified system and create transparency.¹³
 - b. The County should provide senior volunteer leadership with the tools and responsibility to properly manage the administrative activities of their department.
4. The Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors should restructure the current informal Fire and Rescue Organization into one entity. The Board of Supervisors should charge them to serve as a partner with the Fire and Rescue Chief. Together they should serve as centralized unit responsible for all fire and rescue issues throughout the County.
 - a. Name: The entity's name should be decided by the locality. Suggested organization names include;
 - i. Fire and Rescue Commission
 - ii. Fire and Rescue Council
 - iii. Fire and Rescue Association
 - *For the remainder of the report this entity will be referred to "Fire and Rescue Association or Association."*
 - b. This Association should be codified through a local ordinance outlining specific responsibilities and expectations to improve the organizational cohesiveness and efficiency.
 - c. The group should be charged with developing, analyzing, enacting and enforcing system-wide policies, system-wide operational decisions and specifications, and planning and procedures as may be adopted by this group.
 - d. The group should meet monthly on a standard date and time without exception; bylaws must be drafted in such a way that any member shall have the ability to place items on the agenda.
 - e. It is imperative that this Fire and Rescue Association ensure that all affected stakeholders have the ability to participate.
 - f. An organizational chart should be generated and distributed to all affected parties.
5. Working with their volunteer membership, the Fire and Rescue Association should adopt a single countywide Standard Operating Procedures and Guidelines (SOPs/SOGs) with an accountability system.

¹³ Leading the Transition in Volunteer and Combination Fire Departments, November 2005

- a. It is critical that each department be consulted in the development and implementation of standardized policies and procedures. All departments have unique and special considerations that must be accounted for when developing these standards.
- b. Once created, informational and training sessions must be held with all Pittsylvania County fire and rescue members. New members should receive training on these standard operating guidelines during their orientation to ensure integration into the fire and rescue service.
- c. Pittsylvania County should take advantage of pre-existing resources on the development of Standard Operating Guidelines for Fire and EMS organizations, including,
 - i. U.S. Fire Administration's Guide to Developing Standard Operating Procedures, <http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fa-197.pdf>; and, International Association of Fire Chief's Volunteer and Combination Officers Section's Sample Administrative Policies, <http://www.iafc.org/micrositeVCOSorg/Resources/SOPlist.cfm?navItemNumber=6891>

Consolidation of Smaller Departments

Some of the fire departments receive low service calls. It is suggested for the County to evaluate current response districts for both fire and EMS. Pittsylvania County should base districts in accordance to a GIS concentric circle criteria.

Recommendations:

1. Board of Supervisors should pursue efforts to explore the option of consolidating to maximize its limited resources and personnel.
 - a. Call volume, operational expenses, personnel and geographical location must be taken into consideration when determining if multiple departments could be consolidated.

Strategic Planning

During the site visit, Pittsylvania County's fire and rescue organizations acknowledged the need for increased coordination. It was often mentioned that Pittsylvania County's twenty five parallel fire and rescue organizations work separately. Such process could be catastrophic during a major emergency. Operationally, this presents several concerns and barriers towards accomplishing a consistent, high quality level of service sought by Pittsylvania County and its residents. This organizational challenge can be attributed to the fire and rescue services' lack of unified mission statement and strategic plan.

The first steps to resolving clarity within the fire and rescue services organizational structure is to pursue the establishment of a Strategic Plan. Planning must become institutionalized as an

integral part of fire and rescue departments and community resource allocations.¹⁴ A strategic plan will provide a basis for long-term operational planning and will serve as a framework for services.¹⁵ The strategic plan will further allow the vested parties the opportunity to create effective policies while attuned to its publics' interests, demands, and expectations. It is imperative to keep in mind that decisions only have legitimacy if parties involved work together and are in agreement.¹⁶ The strategic planning process will create public value for Pittsylvania County if the fire and EMS and other stakeholders are fairly represented and there is effective use of relevant expertise along with transparency of the deliberations.¹⁷

Recommendations:

1. Working with an organized Fire and Rescue Association, the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors and County Administration should adopt and implement a strategic plan for its fire and rescue services to increase performance levels and achieve lower cost of service delivery.
 - a. Stakeholders such as fire and rescue personnel along with county government must each play an integral part in the development of this strategic plan in order to meet the county's expectations and foster commitment.
 - b. Parties involved in the strategic planning process should analyze the gap between where the county is and where it wants to be in the future and identify strategies to close such gap.
 - c. The county should seek to reduce residents insurance cost by incorporating methods for improving their Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating into the strategic plan.
 - d. It is suggested that a neutral party facilitate this process.
2. In developing its strategic plan, the Fire and Rescue Association should develop a unified vision and mission statement for the Pittsylvania County Fire-Rescue System.
 - a. A unified vision statement will provide the fire and rescue organizations and Pittsylvania County an expansive, aspiring image of the future of fire and rescue services. The vision statement should emphasize purposes, performance criteria, decision rules and standards that serve the public.¹⁸
 - b. A unified mission statement will ensure the fire and rescue organizations are collectively moving forward in one direction to improve service delivery. It will further foster a habit of focusing discussions and meetings on important issues.¹⁹

¹⁴ Preserving and Improving the Future of the Volunteer Fire Service, March 2004

¹⁵ Leading the Transition in Volunteer and Combination Fire Departments, November 2005

¹⁶ Mark Moore, *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government*, 1995

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ John Bryson, *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*, 2004

¹⁹ Ibid

3. The strategic plan should further create a system of measurable goals and objectives. The performance measurement's factors will strengthen the strategic plan.
 - a. The strategic plan should identify immediate, intermediate and long-term goals with reasonable target deadlines.
 - b. Goals and objectives should be quantifiable, consistent, realistic and achievable.²⁰
4. In developing its strategic plan, Pittsylvania County's fire and rescue organizations should continue their commitment to using incident analysis and reporting, to include the Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System (VFIRS) and the Virginia Pre-Hospital Information Bridge (VPHIB).
 - a. Pittsylvania County's commitment to reporting will ensure that they have reliable data to appropriately develop a plan to address operational and capital funding needs, or equipment, apparatus and facility needs.
 - b. By analyzing fire and rescue incident data and potential community hazards, a plan can be developed to address deployment of resources, placement of sub stations, and the number of personnel needed for response and prevention efforts.
 - c. Access to the data collected should be provided to rescue squads and fire departments so they are able to get a comprehensive understanding of their performance.
 - d. The use of data such as VFIRS and VPHIB can be contributing factors to performance measurement and can further enable stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of the strategic plan.

Performance measurements will enable the Board of Supervisors to evaluate the performance of fire and rescue entities tasked with accomplishing the goals and objectives of the strategic plan.²¹ The performance measurement will exhibit clear association between performing, planning, spending and results.²² Pittsylvania County will have the opportunity to evaluate its mission, vision and performance objectives through three perspectives: financial accountability, constituent priorities and internal processes.²³

Accountability Practices

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), a standard operating procedure is "an organizational directive that establishes a standard course of action."²⁴ Thus, Standard

²⁰ Leading the Transition in Volunteer and Combination Fire Departments, November 2005

²¹ Gerald Gordon, *Strategic Planning for Local Government*, 2005

²² Ibid

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Developing Effective Standard Operating Procedures for Fire and EMS Departments, December 1999

Operating Procedures (SOPs) are written guidelines that explain what is expected and required of fire service personnel in performing their jobs.²⁵ During the site visit, the study team discovered the absence of SOPs countywide. It is critical for the County to implement and follow a system of countywide SOPs to coordinate service delivery throughout the Pittsylvania County. It is imperative that all members thoroughly understand their responsibilities and expectations. Organizations that lack SOPs are increasingly vulnerable to accidents, lawsuits, preventable costs, personnel problems, and damage to their professional image.

Recommendations:

1. Create a countywide SOP/SOG with an emphasis on producing an effective accountability system.
 - a. The County should establish system wide Standards Operating Guidelines. Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG's) are designed to provide guidance during emergency incidents.²⁶ This guidance is aimed at ensuring that operations are safe and effective. The main purpose of a SOG is to have everyone essentially operating from the same "playbook" at an incident.
 - The County should take advantage of pre-existing resources on the development of Standard Operating Guidelines for Fire and EMS organizations such as the United States Fire Administration's guide on developing Standard Operating Procedures, <http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fa-197.pdf>, and current organizational guidelines.
 - Once created, informational and training sessions should be held with all Pittsylvania County fire and rescue members and partners.
 - The Table of Contents, or central listing and training, should be included in new members orientation to ensure integration into the organization or fire and rescue service.
2. Establish standardization amongst agencies in regards to helmet color, radio designation, officer positions, and equipment.
3. Utilizing the guidelines outlined in NFPA 1561: Standard on Fire Department Incident Management Systems, County Government²⁷ in collaboration with the Association should formally establish, practice and strictly enforce a countywide Incident Management System policy and accountability system.
 - a. Increased structure and coordination to the management of emergency incidents will ensure the safety and health of fire-rescue personnel.

²⁵ Developing Effective Standard Operating Procedures for Fire and EMS Departments, December 1999

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ County Government refers to both Board of Supervisors and County Administration

- b. The County should adopt an incident management system to manage all emergency incidents and training exercises as well as adopt written plans to anticipate incidents that require standardized procedures.
 - c. National and state standards should be used as a guide for the development process, such as the Incident Command System.²⁸
 - d. It is recommended that these management practices and principles be developed, maintained, and reinforced through an on-going (annual) county-wide exercise program to include Table-Top Discussions, functional exercises, and full-scale exercises administered to ensure inter-departmental coordination, integration, and cooperation.
- 4. Utilizing the guidelines outlined in NFPA 1561: Standard on Fire Department Incident Management Systems, Pittsylvania County should formally articulate, practice and enforce a countywide Incident Management System policy and accountability system. Pittsylvania County should further implement policy and protocols consistent with the principles and expectations of the National Incident Management System (NIMS).
 - a. Increased structure and coordination to the management of emergency incidents will ensure the safety and health of fire-rescue personnel.
 - b. The County should emphasize the importance of incident management system in managing all emergency incidents and training exercises. Pittsylvania County should further emphasize the importance of written plans to anticipate incidents that require standardized procedures.
 - c. The County should explore developing an on-going maintenance of local emergency operations plans for known or potential hazards through the development of the Standard Operations Procedures, Guidelines, or Protocol.
- 5. The County should consider appointing a Safety Officer with the authority to identify health and safety hazards and ensure that they are corrected.
 - a. One individual should be charged to conduct research, recommendations along with the review and processing of injury claims.
 - b. Every emergency scene must be properly assessed to identify any potential hazards. This information will provide guidance in strategic and tactical decisions and must be communicated to all emergency responders.
 - c. The County must strive to protect its first responders at all times and should implement a standard personnel accountability system to account for all firefighters on scene.

²⁸ Incident Command System, Overview; <http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/IncidentCommandSystem.shtm>

- d. The county should utilize *NFPA 1521: Standard on Fire Department Safety Officer*²⁹ as a guide for the development process.

Fire Prevention Activities

Pittsylvania County has opted to enact/enforce the Statewide Fire Prevention Code, which are “statewide standards to safeguard life and property from the hazards of fire or explosion arising from the improper maintenance of life safety and fire prevention and protection materials, devices, systems and structures and the unsafe storage handling, and use of substances, materials and devices, including fireworks, explosives and blasting agents, wherever located.”³⁰ The study team was advised that the fire marshal does not have law enforcement authority. The county should reconsider such authority to allow a reasonable span of control.

Recommendations:

1. Pittsylvania County should designate its current fire marshal as the individual responsible for the enforcement of fire codes, fire investigations, and to coordinate public fire and life safety education.
 - a. The County should explicitly designate and outline the law enforcement authority granted to the fire marshal.

THEME 2: COMMUNICATIONS

In order to develop a cohesive Fire-Rescue System in Pittsylvania County, the Board of Supervisors and the County Administration must foster positive internal and external communication among the county’s fire and rescue organizations along with members of the general public. Without effective and trusting relationships, the county will have limited success with the recommendations contained in this report and any other attempts at coordinating and improving the fire and rescue services in Pittsylvania County. Before other identified recommendations can be implemented, effective and reliable communication capabilities must be established between the volunteer departments and the county.

Fire and Rescue personnel must have access to reliable and instantaneous communications at all times to effectively coordinate response and recovery operations. Emergency communications is not solely a product of technology, but rather a condition of a locality’s governance, standard operating procedures and training. To achieve an effective and efficient emergency response framework, all areas of emergency communications must collectively work effectively.³¹ Without reliable communications, the safety and security of Pittsylvania County’s fire and rescue service providers are jeopardized.

²⁹ NFPA 1521, <http://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/document-information-pages?mode=code&code=1521>

³⁰ 2009 Statewide Fire Prevention Code, Preface, page i.

³¹ Ten Years After 9/11: Improving Emergency Communications: Hearing before the U.S. Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee (July 2011).

Levels of Interdepartmental Communications

During the site visit, the study committee observed a need for improved communication among the county's first responders. Lack of effective personal and professional communications between staff can have the potential to affect the application of fire and rescue activities in Pittsylvania County. The burden lies with the County Administration and the Board of Supervisors to resolve any conflicting perception and ensure an open and honest dialogue is established. The County must identify and resolve the breakdowns in communications and work tirelessly to educate all members.³²

Recommendations:

1. The County should host a strategic communication session with a professional mediator to resolve existing challenges and barriers amongst the following entities; fire and rescue departments, Fire and Rescue Association along with Pittsylvania County Administration and its Board of Supervisors.
 - a. The objective of this work session should be to develop strategies to overcome identified barriers. It should further create and implement an effective communication system involving fire and rescue departments, County Government and with the general public.
 - b. The County must develop an efficient and effective communication model to ensure all stakeholders within the public safety community have input into long-term plans and decisions.
 - c. This communication model must ensure reliable documentation related to public safety strategic planning and development. It must be disseminated and received by all public safety stakeholders.
 - d. The communication session should further serve as an opportunity to clarify and establish countywide division of labor.
2. The County should explore additional ways to communicate with its fire and rescue personnel. Some options include producing an annual report, developing a quarterly newsletter and utilizing social networking avenues.
3. The County should strengthen its fire and life-safety communication activities with the residents of Pittsylvania County.
 - a. Increased efforts to promote the positives attributes of the fire and rescue services in Pittsylvania County can raise morale and attract more volunteers. Some options include producing an annual report, developing a quarterly newsletter and utilizing social networking avenues.

³² Leading the Transition in Volunteer and Combination Fire Departments, November 2005

4. Pittsylvania County must evaluate current radio procedures and dispatch policies to reduce time from call covered notification until apparatus is response. The County should further develop map book and identify available water resources.
5. The County should take advantage of pre-existing fire and life-safety information available through state and federal organizations. Public fire and life-safety education resources are available at the following locations:
 - i. Virginia Department of Fire Programs:
http://vafire.com/fire_safety_education
 - ii. Virginia Fire and Life Safety Coalition: <http://www.vflsc.org>
 - iii. The Home Safety Council: <http://www.homesafetycouncil.org>
 - iv. National Fire Protection Association: <http://www.nfpa.org>
 - v. Virginia Department of Forestry: <http://www.firePittsylvaniaivirginia.org>
 - vi. Virginia Department of Emergency Management:
<http://www.vaemergency.gov/social-media/alert-localities>

THEME 3: TRAINING

One of the secrets of a successful countywide Fire-Rescue System is the full integration of volunteer personnel, regardless of their affiliation, at the tactical level. Tactical equality recognizes all positions, from firefighter through senior fire officer and requires minimum training standards to ensure performance level.³³ Tactical equality is achievable in Pittsylvania County if the departments provide performance-based, certifiable training and the opportunity for all volunteer personnel to train together. The approach will facilitate the development of personal and professional relationships. Training and continuity of leadership are closely joined because solid basic training will foster strong and consistent cooperation among the County's emergency response agencies.

Coordinated Training Program

Development of important skills is the basis for safety and improving services received by the citizens. During the site visit, the study committee heard the quantity and diversity of training was not adequately addressing the volunteers' training needs. Coordination to provide additional training opportunities is needed with an emphasis of increasing cohesion between the fire and rescue organizations as well as cost-saving.

Recommendations:

1. Aligning with the strategic planning efforts, it is recommended that structured and coordinated training program be established to address the comprehensive training

³³ Leading the Transition in Volunteer and Combination Fire Departments, November 2005

needs of the entire county. It is further recommended placing an emphasis on the importance of specialty training and schedules.

- a. The Fire and Rescue Association in collaboration with the Board of Supervisors and County Administration should explore the feasibility of creating a Training Committee to develop and coordinate the application of a countywide training program. The committee can be an entity within the Fire and Rescue Association. This committee should work to increase the number of trainings and collaborative multi-company training opportunities.
 - i. Decision on how to establish this training committee is left to Pittsylvania County.
 - b. It is important for the Training Committee to ensure that the necessary training is being offered and with appropriate notice to ensure maximum turnout and return on investment.
 - c. Better coordination and increased local training opportunities will also assist with recruitment and retention efforts for Pittsylvania County's fire and rescue organizations.
 - d. The County should explore utilizing both traditional classroom platforms as well as distance learning models. Online training allows greater flexibility in the application of courses to accommodate the schedule of volunteers.
 - e. The Board of Supervisors should appropriate all the necessary resources to fulfill the County's identified training challenges and fully train existing firefighters and rescue personnel.
2. Establish a Fire Training Officer and EMS Training Officer under the Department of Fire and Rescue to provide adequate training.
 3. The Fire and Rescue Association should encourage all new firefighters be cross-trained as Emergency Medical First Responders, at minimum, to enhance rescue capacity within Pittsylvania County.
 - a. The Emergency Medical Responder/First Responder (EMR/FR) program offered by the Virginia Department of Health (Office of Emergency Medical Services) provides training in emergency care for those who are likely to be the first personnel responding to the scene of an accident, fire, or medical emergency.³⁴
 - b. The course prepares the responder to address the immediate life threats and injuries until more highly-trained personnel are available.
 - c. Having all firefighters obtain a first responder certification will ensure a rapid response in the event of a major medical emergency or trauma.

³⁴ Virginia Department of Health (Office of Emergency Medical Services) and FY14 Pittsylvania County Budget

The foregoing is a recommendation authorized pursuant to Va. Code 9.1-203.A.4 and is not to be construed as legal advice or as a binding recommendation.

- d. The Emergency Medical First Responder classes should be offered in conjunction with each Firefighter I program.

THEME 4: BUDGET AND ADMINISTRATION

For FY2015, Pittsylvania County received a total of \$189,030 from the Commonwealth of Virginia's Fire Programs Fund. Additionally, Pittsylvania County received approximately \$61,111.44 from the Office of Emergency Medical Services in Four-for-Life funds, which are utilized to fund training, personnel and equipment expenses.³⁵ To supplement operational cost, some fire departments and rescue squads have a fundraising.

Pittsylvania County allocated \$1,668,689 to all fire departments and rescue squads during FY2015.³⁶ Moreover, the budget document cites a line item of \$70,000 which is paid to Regional One EMS Incorporated to provide contracted backup EMS services in the County.³⁷ Backup EMS service is utilized after six minutes of no response from the County's first due EMS providers.

Pittsylvania also has a block funding line item of another \$70,000.³⁸ The block funding is disbursed amongst three privately owned EMS services providers that provide daily rescue services to the County. The entities are Danville Lifesaving & First Aid Crew, Altavista Rescue & Lifesaving Crew, and North Halifax Fire & Rescue.³⁹ These entities act as a first due response to citizens within Pittsylvania County. The soft billing for rescue provided \$228,250.79 during FY2015⁴⁰. This amount is for calls answered by 7 EMS agencies under the County's billing system. Additionally, there are other agencies that bill on their own.

County Funding and Capital Improvements

The County provides various levels of financial assistance without an accountability system in place. For example, the study team was advised that Pittsylvania County pays for certain utility bills along with insurance and fuel. Below are specific bills the County pays for on behalf of its providers;

- Insurance - \$187,054.37
- Electricity - \$154,591.20
- Vehicle Fuel – \$130,068.23
- Heating fuel - \$91,562.31
- Fax Line/Telephone Line for Association President - \$9,881.32

Such blanket funding is inefficient. Pittsylvania County should restructure the funding model to better achieve equality. The Board of Supervisors has been trusted by the citizens of

³⁵ Office of Emergency Medical Services and Pittsylvania County FY15 Budget

³⁶ Pittsylvania County FY15 Budget

³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ Ibid

Pittsylvania County to exercise fiscal responsibility and must therefore ensure taxpayers' dollars are spent efficiently. The burden rests with the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors to ensure its limited monies are utilized responsibly and fairly. Strong accounting practices and accountability measures provide fire and rescue leadership the opportunity to demonstrate its financial needs may be greater than the allocated monies. Greater transparency over the budget will eliminate any distrust between the Board of Supervisors and the Fire-Rescue System's leadership.

Recommendations:

1. With input from the Fire and Rescue Association, the Board of Supervisors should improve its capital improvement plan for upgrading its fire and rescue stations and equipment. At minimum it should include funding for apparatus replacement, turnout gear and air pack replacement with consideration of inflation costs.
 - a. Board of Supervisors should establish a countywide equipment replacement policy with an emphasis on rotational equipment replacement based on prioritized needs.
2. A formal accountability plan should be developed for county funds and revenue recovery funds. The plan should be communicated to citizens and members of the fire and rescue organizations.
 - a. The County should require annual or biannual financial audits or an Agreed Upon Procedures (AUP) to be completed and submitted to Budget Office or County Administration.
 - b. Clarify and document any services provided to the volunteer agencies such as hose testing, ladder testing, and pump/pack testing in one document as a "one pager" easy to read tool.
 - c. The County should promote such accountability process to exhibit the value of financial resources, human capital and time.
 - d. This accountability plan should be developed with fire and rescue organizations' participation and must ensure it is in accordance to state and national standards.
 - e. By creating an accountability plan and communicating funding usage, confusion should be reduced among fire and rescue organizations on the usage of limited county funds.
3. The Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors should consider improving their use of Grants Writers to assist the fire and rescue organizations with the acquisition and management of grants. This individual should research and consider the availability of all federal, state and private grant programs, including:
 - a. The Department of Forestry's Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) grants:
<http://www.dof.virginia.gov/fire/index-vfa.htm>

The foregoing is a recommendation authorized pursuant to Va. Code 9.1-203.A.4 and is not to be construed as legal advice or as a binding recommendation.

- b. The Department of Forestry's Firewise Virginia Community Hazard Mitigation grants:
<http://www.dof.virginia.gov/fire/index-mitigation.shtml>
- c. The Department of Forestry's Dry Hydrant grants:
<http://www.dof.virginia.gov/fire/dryhydrant/dry-hydrant.htm>
- d. The Federal Emergency Management Agency's Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG):
<http://www.firegrantsupport.com/content/html/afg/>
- e. The Virginia Department of Health-Office of Emergency Medical Services' Rescue Squad Assistance Fund (RSAF) Grants:
<http://www.vdh.state.va.us/OEMS/Grants/index.htm>
- f. The grant programs offered by the Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB) through the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP).⁴¹
- g. Various private grant programs.⁴²

Standardization and Central Purchasing

Pittsylvania County's fire and rescue organizations must pursue serious efforts to continue using the central purchasing process. Moreover, the study team discovered that the County can experience additional cost-savings if there were a standardization of future equipment and apparatus purchases. Standardization and Central Purchasing will not be without difficulty, but is necessary for delivering cost-effective and efficient fire and rescue services. Group purchasing is highly required in Pittsylvania County. It is imperative that the County enforce minimum specifications for apparatus and equipment if distributing funding assistance.

Recommendation:

1. Establish a basic fire apparatus standard for equipment such as Engines and Tankers.
 - a. Standardization of equipment is important as volunteers are dwindling. There is more mutual aid being utilized. It is important for volunteer personnel to be knowledgeable on how to utilize another fire department's equipment.
2. The County Administration should develop and implement a centralized purchasing option to leverage county purchasing power and reduce operational expenses.
3. The County Administration after consultation with the Fire and Rescue Association shall develop specifications for central purchase activity areas. Below are suggested areas/activities for central purchasing:
 - a. Personal Protective Equipment⁴³ and Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus⁴⁴
Ensure all departments are purchasing compatible equipment that meets

⁴¹ A listing of available VFSB is available online, http://www.vafire.com/grants_local_aid/index.htm

⁴² A wide variety of Fire and EMS grants can be found on <http://www.grants.gov/> <http://www.firegrantshelp.com/nvfc/> and <http://www.emsgrantshelp.com/>

⁴³ NFPA 1971, <http://www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/AboutTheCodes.asp?DocNum=1971>

⁴⁴ NFPA 1981, <http://www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/AboutTheCodes.asp?DocNum=1981>

National Fire Protection Association standards and are reaping the same cost savings.

- b. Equipment/Apparatus – The Fire and Rescue Association should survey each department to determine if equipment commonalities exist. As previously mentioned, common apparatus specifications should be created and contracted, allowing volunteer organizations to make customizations without overly altering the specs, and reap the benefits of group purchasing for routine maintenance and replacement of aging ambulance and fire apparatus.
4. The Fire and Rescue Association should survey each department to determine if equipment commonalities exist.
 - a. Explore the opportunity to create an Apparatus Repair and Replacement Subcommittee within the Association order to identify and prioritize needs of apparatus replacement and/or repair.
 - b. This critical priority list of apparatus should utilize the NFPA 1911 – Standard for Inspection, Maintenance, Testing and Retirement of In-Service Automotive Fire Apparatus.⁴⁵
 - c. An inventory and capabilities of all vehicles should be provided to the Dispatch/Communication Center to improve dispatch development.
 - d. Fire and rescue departments must be strongly encouraged against making significant equipment purchases outside those approved by the Board of Supervisors. It is not fiscally responsible to make equipment purchases that place the County and individual departments in a financially unstable standing.
5. The Fire and Rescue Association should develop specifications for future apparatus purchases (considering the cost-effectiveness of regional contracts), refurbishment and replacement using the following national consensus standards:
 - a. NFPA 1901 - Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus ⁴⁶
 - b. NFPA 1911 – Standard for Inspection, Maintenance, Testing and Retirement of In-Service Automotive Fire Apparatus ⁴⁷
 - c. NFPA 1912 – Standard for Fire Apparatus Refurbishing ⁴⁸

THEME 5: DELIVERY OF SERVICES

Several outside factors are affecting the fire and rescue personnel in Pittsylvania County. Similar to many other jurisdictions, the county lacks adequate personnel to address call volume and growing administrative requirements. According to the 2014 Virginia Fire Service Needs

⁴⁵ NFPA 1911, <http://www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/AboutTheCodes.asp?DocNum=1911>

⁴⁶ NFPA 1901, <http://www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/AboutTheCodes.asp?DocNum=1901>

⁴⁷ NFPA 1911, <http://www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/AboutTheCodes.asp?DocNum=1911>

⁴⁸ NFPA 1912, <http://www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/AboutTheCodes.asp?DocNum=1912>

Assessment, Pittsylvania County reported that the present call volume warranted 197 volunteer personnel to sufficiently staff their stations.⁴⁹

The limited and aging populations along with the lack of incentives make it difficult to recruit volunteers. This shortfall has decreased morale and has forced the county to increase the workload on its limited members with multiple responsibilities. The availability of personnel plays a large role in the quality of service provided to the citizens of Pittsylvania County. It is highly recommended for the county government to actively participate in recruiting volunteers.

As previously cited the County should critically analyze its current fire and rescue station locations and adopt all warranted changes. A thorough review of these response districts is required to ensure call volumes and response times are aligned along with placement of fire and rescue stations are strategic. Development must be a collaborative effort by fire and rescue association along with county's administration and Board of Supervisors.

Recommendations:

1. Pittsylvania County should establish and implement countywide standards to ensure a high level of accountability.
2. Pittsylvania County Government should work with the Fire and Rescue Association to identify needs for additional fire and rescue personnel to meet service demands and citizen expectations.
 - a. The County Government should reexamine its current system and must find methods to effectively use the human capital that are in the fire and rescue system presently.
3. Fire and Rescue Association should provide scheduled updates to the Board of Supervisors and citizen groups on ongoing activity related to positive and negative areas of service delivery.
 - a. Information associated to call data is an effective tool that can exhibit an entity's ability to meet its community's needs.
4. Pittsylvania County should pursue efforts to establish a Tanker Task Force concept to improve water supply capabilities and re-evaluate ISO rating throughout county.
5. Utilizing call volume data and geography, the Board of Supervisors should revisit the placement of its fire and rescue stations.
 - a. It is not in the best interests of the citizens to have overlapping service areas and multiple departments competing for emergency calls.

⁴⁹ See Appendix 4: 2014 Virginia Fire Service Needs Assessment.

- b. The Insurance Service Office (ISO) Grading schedule⁵⁰ should be used to aid in the placement of fire and rescue stations and the development of the corresponding response districts.

Recruitment and Retention

Recruiting and retaining quality personnel is an essential component to the overall success of a volunteer fire and rescue departments. Like many areas throughout the nation and the Commonwealth of Virginia, Pittsylvania County has felt the impact of declining numbers of men and women volunteering for fire and rescue departments. Currently, there is limited assistance from the County to help the fire and rescue organizations recruit personnel. The study team encourages increased efforts on the part of County Government to recruit and retain volunteers.

In order to relieve the current burden of limited human capital, the County must provide increased leadership and participation towards the recruitment of volunteers. County Government and the Fire and Rescue Association should encourage emergency services leaders to contribute to other aspects of the community.

Recommendations:

1. Pittsylvania County should create a countywide recruitment and retention program.
 - a. The recruitment and retention program should take into consideration the needs of current volunteers and identify motivational factors to keep this population engaged and committed to the fire and rescue service. It is therefore encouraged for the county to improve on its current incentive based recruitment and retention program.
 - b. The County should set annual recruitment and retention goals and concentrate its efforts and resources to achieving these benchmarks. The plan should be included in the strategic plan.
 - c. Opportunities of partnering with high schools to create fire and EMS training should be explored.
2. The County should establish a Recruitment and Retention Officer position to serve all countywide recruitment efforts.
3. Pittsylvania County must Standardize County Volunteer Incentive program to ensure fairness and equality.
4. The County should establish Officer Development Program to ensure new officers are aware of county processes and procedures.

⁵⁰ Insurance Services Office, Inc (2012).

5. The Fire and Rescue Association and County Government must identify additional fire and rescue personnel needs continuously.
 - a. Through improvement of fire and rescue incident data analysis and strategic planning, Pittsylvania County will be able to determine fire and rescue personnel needs, equipment needs and deployment.⁵¹
6. The County Government and Fire and Rescue Association should collaboratively find low-cost methods to enhance public-education efforts such as open houses and creating PSAs.⁵²
 - a. Improve the visibility of the Pittsylvania County fire and rescue services in the community.
 - b. Word-of-mouth recruiting is effective; therefore, each volunteer should be encouraged to inform their respective community network about Pittsylvania fire and rescue services' training and educational opportunities.
7. In addition, Pittsylvania County's fire and rescue organizations should take advantage of pre-existing recruitment and retention information. Resources may be downloaded at the following locations:
 - a. Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
 - i. <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/OEMS/Agency/Recruitment/index.htm>
 - ii. http://www.vdh.state.va.us/OEMS/Files_page/Locality_Resources/EMSWorkbook_0405.pdf
 - iii. http://www.vdh.state.va.us/OEMS/Files_page/Locality_Resources/EMSWorkbook3.pdf
 - b. BecomeEMS.org - <http://www.becomeems.org/>
 - c. Fire/Volunteer (Guide) - <http://www.nvfc.org/resources/rr/retention-recruitment-guide/>
 - d. Fire/Volunteer (Video) - <http://www.nvfc.org/files/documents/Retention-and-Recruitment-Volunteer-Fire-Emergency-Services.wmv>.
 - e. 2004 Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission Report. "Review of EMS in Virginia" Part III of the report; *Recruitment, Retention and Training of EMS Providers* (Page 55) – <http://leg2.state.va.us/dls/h&sdocs.nsf/4d54200d7e28716385256ec1004f3130/87c75ac37063994d85256ec500553c41?OpenDocument>

⁵¹ International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) - "Make Better Decisions: Put Your Data to Work," <http://www.iafc.org/MemberCenter/OnSceneArticle.cfm?ItemNumber=5840>. This article provides an example of how multiple sources of data can be incorporated into fire and rescue department planning.

⁵² *Fire Service Image Task Force Report: Taking Responsibility for a Positive Public Perception* 15

Operations and Staffing

Special attention should be made to ensure fire and rescue capabilities are adequate for the potential hazards presented by the economic developments in Pittsylvania County and its interstate highway system.

Recommendations:

1. Pittsylvania County must consider establishing minimal staffing standards for apparatus response.
2. Pittsylvania County should explore the possibility of establishing one Countywide EMS/Rescue Agency; individual stations can retain their names.
 - a. One Countywide EMS/Rescue Agency will enable efficient revenue recovery.
3. The County should look into obtaining one Operational Medical Director working under one set of patient care protocols.
4. The County should seek to reduce residents insurance cost by improving Insurance Service Office (ISO) ratings.
 - a. This can be accomplished through improved training records and adding more dry hydrants within the community.
 - b. The county should continue working with the Department of Forestry (DOF) to obtain additional Dry Hydrants.
 - i. Grants can be obtained through DOF's Dry Hydrant Grant Program:
<http://www.dof.virginia.gov/fire/dry-hydrants.shtml>.
5. Pittsylvania County fire and rescue services should keep accurate records of incident response times in order to continuously assess response capabilities.
 - a) It is recommended that the county utilize the NFPA guidance documents as resource documents.
 - b) The 2010 edition of *NFPA 1720: Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments* addresses the organization and deployment of fire suppression operations, emergency medical operations, and special operations to the public by all volunteer fire departments.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1: Pittsylvania County Letter of Request – April 2014

Appendix 2: Pittsylvania County - Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System Report Summary

APPENDIX 3: Pittsylvania County – Virginia Pre-Hospital Information Bridge Report Summary

Appendix 4: Pittsylvania County 2014 Needs Assessment Summary Statistics

Appendix 5: Pittsylvania County FY2014 Aid-to-Localities Allocation Report

APPENDIX 1: PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY LETTER OF REQUEST

PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY
VIRGINIA

Clarence C. Monday
County Administrator
P.O. Box 426
Chatham, Virginia 24531
clarence.monday@pittgov.org



1 Center Street, Chatham, Virginia
Phone (434) 432-7710
Fax (434) 432-7714
Website: www.pittsylvaniacountyva.gov

January 30, 2015

Mr. Mohamed G. Abbamin, MPA
Policy Manager
Virginia Department of Fire Programs
1005 Technology Park Drive
Glen Allen, VA 23059

RE: Comprehensive Analysis Study of Fire/EMS System Request – Pittsylvania County

Dear Mr. Abbamin;

This is to request the services of the Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB) in conducting a complete and thorough review of the fire and EMS system in Pittsylvania County.

This study has the support of the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors and County Administration as shown by the attached resolution adopted at the Board's October 6, 2014 meeting.

The requested areas of concentration of this study include:

- Organization
- Budget and Administration
- Training
- Delivery of Services
- Fleet Design and Management (Equipment/Apparatus)
- Emergency Medical Advisory Committee
- Pittsylvania County Fire & Rescue Association.

It is the Board's and County Administration's proposal to have a complete and thorough review of the aforementioned areas of concentration and a comprehensive list of recommendations to enhance the delivery of services to the citizens of Pittsylvania County.

Your consideration of this request at the next available opportunity would be greatly appreciated. I am available to respond to any questions you might have regarding this request. I can be reached by phone at 434.432.7710 or by email at Clarence.Monday@pittgov.org.

Sincerely,



Clarence C. Monday
County Administrator

CCM/rf
Enclosure

APPENDIX 2: PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY – VIRGINIA FIRE INCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM REPORT

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs manages the Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System (VFIRS). VFIRS is the statewide system for tracking all emergency responses with fire departments in Virginia. By reporting their incidents to VFIRS, fire departments document the details of their incidents for legal purposes and documenting the overall activities of their fire department.

Incident Type Summary, Pittsylvania County, Virginia 2010-2014*

Incident Type	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Fires	321	366	338	301	295	1,621
EMS/Rescue	3,250	2,885	3,033	3,067	2,959	15,194
Hazardous Condition	248	190	242	219	189	1,088
Service Calls	247	191	208	209	191	1,046
Good Intent	276	253	447	429	378	1,783
False Alarm	149	151	146	157	161	764
Other	63	19	35	24	3	144
Total Incidents	4,554	4,055	4,449	4,406	4,176	21,640
Aid Given	514	660	663	577	745	3,159
Exposures	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	5,068	4,715	5,112	4,983	4,921	24,799

Fire Dollar Loss Summary, Pittsylvania County, Virginia 2010-2014*

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Dollar Loss	\$1,526,325	\$1,345,248	\$5,640,637	\$2,288,765	\$1,563,858	\$12,364,833

Casualty Loss Summary, Pittsylvania County, Virginia 2010-2014*

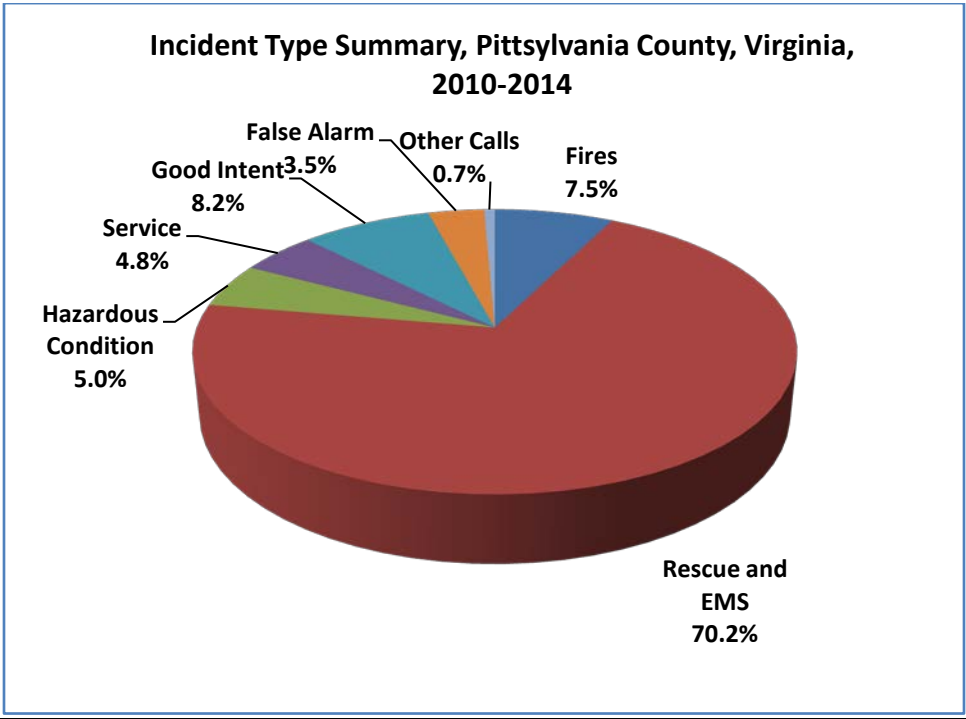
Incident Type	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Civilian Fire Injuries	0	0	0	2	0	2
Civilian Fire Deaths	1	2	3	0	0	6
Fire Service Injuries	0	0	1	0	2	3
Fire Service Deaths	0	0	0	0	0	0

APPENDIX 2: PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY – VIRGINIA FIRE INCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM REPORT CONT:**VFIRS Participation By Fire Department, Pittsylvania County, Virginia 2010-2014**

Fire Department	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Riceville- Java Vol. Fire Dept.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hurt Vol. Fire Dept	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Renan Vol. Fire Dept.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Riverbend Vol. Fire Dept			Yes	Yes	
Tunstall Vol. Fire & Rescue	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mount Hermon Vol. Fire & Rescue	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mount Cross Vol. Fire Dept	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Climax Vol. Fire Dept.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ringgold Vol. Fire & Rescue	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bachelor Hall Vol. Fire Dept.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Chatham Vol. Fire Dept.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gretna Vol. Fire Dept.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Brosville Community Vol. Fire Dept.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cool Branch Vol. Fire Dept.					Yes
Blairs Vol. Fire Dept.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Callands Vol. Fire & Rescue Dept.				Yes	Yes
Dry Fork Vol. Fire Dept.	Yes			Yes	Yes
Cascade Vol. Fire Dept.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kentuck Vol. Fire Dept.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Keeling Vol. Fire Dept.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Laurel Grove Vol. Fire Dept	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fire Departments Participating	18	17	18	20	20
Total Fire Departments	21	21	21	21	21
Percent Reporting	86%	81%	86%	95%	95%

The foregoing is a recommendation authorized pursuant to Va. Code 9.1-203.A.4 and is not to be construed as legal advice or as a binding recommendation.

APPENDIX 2: PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY – VIRGINIA FIRE INCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM REPORT CONT:



APPENDIX 3: PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY – VIRGINIA PRE-HOSPITAL INFORMATION BRIDGE REPORT SUMMARY

The Virginia Department of Health’s Office of Emergency Medical Service manages the Virginia Pre-Hospital Information Bridge (VPHIB). VPHIB is the statewide system for tracking all emergency medical services (EMS) responses with EMS organizations in Virginia. In accordance with the *Code of Virginia*, “Maintaining a comprehensive emergency medical services patient care data collection and performance improvement system. (32.1-111.3)”

Pittsylvania County	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Year	Grand
	2015	4	4	2	5	0	1							16	2015	
640 Community Rescue	2014	6	3	4	4	1	5	6	3	3	1	5	5	46	2014	
499	2013	4	4	6	9	9	4	5	3	4	5	3	2	58	2013	
	2012	5	4	9	14	13	11	13	6	11	5	12	7	110	2012	230

	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Year	Grand
Bachelors Hall Volunteer	2015	18	16	9	9	15	26							93	2015	
Fire Dept	2014	4	6	2	3	1	5	3	3	2	17	12	9	67	2014	
716	2013	2	1	1	0	1	3	2	3	2	4	11	9	39	2013	
	2012	5	4	1	3	3	2	1	1	0	0	1	2	23	2012	222

	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Year	Grand
Blairs Volunteer	2015	49	33	39	38	56	37							252	2015	
Fire & Rescue Inc	2014	44	39	49	44	53	52	51	37	13	17	44	36	479	2014	
616	2013	40	39	52	36	50	41	45	44	56	38	42	45	528	2013	
	2012	18	36	35	28	35	46	43	39	31	35	27	34	407	2012	1,666

	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Year	Grand
Callands Volunteer	2015	16	17	15	11	15	14							88	2015	
Fire & Rescue	2014	20	10	17	13	11	17	17	10	14	13	12	9	163	2014	
537	2013	27	17	19	14	14	20	15	4	12	21	15	43	221	2013	
	2012	20	17	18	14	23	16	24	22	16	16	14	22	222	2012	694

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	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Year	Grand
Cascade Volunteer	2015	10	7	3	1	0	0							21	2015	
Fire Dept	2014	9	11	11	6	8	6	6	7	3	4	8	14	93	2014	
1097	2013	4	8	13	12	7	10	12	9	10	7	11	3	106	2013	
	2012	9	4	4	6	11	8	5	9	10	4	6	13	89	2012	309

	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Year	Grand
Chatham Rescue Squad	2015	16	17	23	21	40	23							140	2015	
160	2014	46	38	38	13	6	9	24	36	44	39	17	24	334	2014	
	2013	15	4	8	19	23	9	2	3	2	2	9	18	114	2013	
	2012	34	30	17	27	25	14	18	12	5	11	7	14	214	2012	802

	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Year	Grand
Climax Volunteer	2015	2	1	5	2	3	0							13	2015	
Fire Company	2014	3	5	1	5	1	3	4	1	0	0	0	2	25	2014	
640	2013	8	7	7	11	7	8	12	6	6	5	3	2	82	2013	
	2012	9	6	12	13	9	11	6	10	6	9	9	6	106	2012	226

	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Year	Grand
Dry Fork	2015	4	6	9	3	7	0							29	2015	
Volunteer Fire Dept.	2014	11	6	3	2	9	8	3	6	2	4	5	3	62	2014	
915	2013	6	3	11	12	5	6	7	4	8	9	11	7	89	2013	
	2012	6	11	7	4	6	4	15	16	9	3	6	4	91	2012	271

	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Year	Grand
Gretna Rescue Squad	2015	53	37	43	33	42	34							242	2015	
159	2014	32	30	34	50	43	29	45	39	36	55	31	42	466	2014	
	2013	46	32	30	33	25	18	20	25	32	63	21	35	380	2013	
	2012	26	16	21	18	28	27	32	22	20	44	31	34	319	2012	1,407

	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Year	Grand
Keeling Volunteer	2015	6	3	2	7	5	10							33	2015	
Fire Dept	2014	6	7	5	1	7	6	7	7	3	3	3	4	59	2014	
1094	2013	5	8	4	5	8	7	6	9	8	6	6	4	76	2013	
	2012	5	4	7	10	7	6	7	7	8	1	5	10	77	2012	245

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	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Year	Grand
Kentuck Volunteer	2015	3	9	7	10	10	8							47	2015	
Fire Dept	2014	2	2	7	4	5	1	4	3	2	6	2	8	46	2014	
1095	2013	12	6	15	9	11	4	3	8	7	3	6	2	86	2013	
	2012	11	13	11	6	7	5	13	15	9	2	7	8	107	2012	286

	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Year	Grand
Laurel Grove	2015	2	0	2	0	0	0							4	2015	
Volunteer Fire & Rescue	2014	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	10	2014	
627	2013	6	10	11	4	1	1	1	3	3	0	2	0	42	2013	
	2012	3	12	2	1	1	1	7	5	3	4	2	7	48	2012	104

	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Year	Grand
Mount Cross	2015	12	9	11	12	6	3							53	2015	
Volunteer Fire & Rescue	2014	2	9	7	20	15	13	11	12	3	1	13	15	121	2014	
916	2013	13	5	7	8	12	10	11	13	8	11	9	8	115	2013	
	2012	22	5	9	11	4	8	18	14	17	16	10	18	152	2012	441

	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Year	Grand
Ringgold	2015	50	69	47	57	36	47							306	2015	
Fire & Rescue Dept	2014	48	47	42	59	56	47	44	53	45	51	63	57	612	2014	
657	2013	64	41	67	54	55	43	35	60	56	45	51	54	625	2013	
	2012	48	55	47	65	54	48	65	56	52	60	34	64	648	2012	2191

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APPENDIX 4: PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY – 2014 NEEDS ASSESSMENT SUMMARY STATISTICS

The Fire Service Needs Assessment is an annual survey conducted by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs. Fire departments complete a survey questionnaire designed to identify their critical needs. Results are compiled and published in a comprehensive report available each January. The Department of Fire Programs received responses from all six fire departments located in Pittsylvania County.

Fire Department Personnel	Current*	Need Reported**
Career Firefighters	0	18
Volunteer Firefighters	414	197
Paid-Per-Call	0	0
Total Firefighters	414	215
Civilian-Paid	15	0
Civilian-Volunteer	252	62
Total Civilian Personnel	267	62

**Taken from Supplemental Table 1 of the 2014 Virginia Fire Service Needs Assessment.*

Apparatus Owned	Current*	Need Reported **
Aerial Apparatus	2	1
Ambulance/Other Patient Transport	18	2
Command Support Unit	4	1
Command Vehicle (SUV)	4	4
Engine/Pumper	33	7
Fire/Rescue Boat	0	2
Hazardous Materials Vehicle	0	0
Heavy Technical Rescue Vehicle	4	3
Logistical Support Apparatus	2	0
Quint Combination Vehicle	0	2
Tanker	23	3
Wildland Brush Truck	17	3
Other Apparatus	7	1

**Taken from Supplemental Table 2*

***Taken from Supplemental Table 5*

APPENDIX 4: PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY – 2014 NEEDS ASSESSMENT SUMMARY STATISTICS

Equipment Owned	Current*	Need Reported **
4-Gas Monitors	24	15
Map Coordinate System – GPS	16	28
Mobile Data Terminals	12	13
Personal Alert Safety Systems	143	16
Personal Protective Equipment	483	140
Radios with Emergency Alert Button	409	10
Radios without Emergency Alert Button	58	0
Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (without integrated PASS)	16	10
Self-Contained Breathing (with integrated PASS)	267	58
Thermal Imaging Cameras	24	9
Other Equipment	0	11

**Taken from Supplemental Table 3*

***Taken from Supplemental Table 6*

APPENDIX 5: PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY FY2015 AID-TO-LOCALITIES ALLOCATION REPORT

Description	Population (2010 Census)	FY2015 Allocation
Pittsylvania County	59,666	189,030
Total	59,666	189,030

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